Step 2. Proposal Abstract

Name of Applicant(s) Watershed Restoration Coalition

Project Title Cottonwood Creek Fish Passage Project

Cottonwood Creek is the largest and most biologically significant eastside tributary of the upper Clark Fork between Warm Springs Ponds and the Little Blackfoot River. Although it suffers from habitat degradation, impaired water quality, and de-watering, Cottonwood Creek and its tributaries contain important populations of westslope cutthroat trout – including at least one genetically pure population – in their headwaters. In addition, the middle and lower reaches support populations of brown and rainbow trout that could, if restored, provide the basis for a recreational fishery. Throughout the entire watershed are sections of potential spawning habitat for both native and non-native trout that could provide important sources of recruitment of adult fluvial fish to the mainstem Clark Fork River.

At present, upstream migration of salmonids is effectively blocked by two physical barriers near the mouth of Cottonwood Creek. The first barrier is the Kohrs-Manning Ditch, which intercepts the creek and diverts its entire surface flow just upstream of its former confluence with the Clark Fork (Appendix A map 1). The second barrier, just upstream of the ditch, is the culvert system where the creek passes beneath Interstate 90, whose lower end has eroded and created a vertical drop of several feet (Appendix A map 1).

The purpose of the present project is to provide fish passage at both barriers, thus reconnecting Cottonwood Creek and the Clark Fork and allowing both native and non-native salmonids from the mainstem to access the creek for spawning. Project applicant Watershed Restoration Council ("WRC") proposes to address the first barrier by constructing a siphon that would route the Kohrs-Manning Ditch beneath Cottonwood Creek, and constructing a short reach of pool-drop channel to reconnect the creek to the river below the ditch. The second barrier would be addressed by constructing a similar pool-drop structure at the lower end of the culvert, establishing a gradient that would allow fish passage.

Re-establishing fish passage at the mouth of Cottonwood Creek would be a key step that would reinforce planned and ongoing restoration efforts on both the creek and the Clark Fork. In the Cottonwood Creek watershed, both the US Forest Service and the WRC have conducted extensive stream assessment work and identified specific restoration projects (see figure 1). On the Clark Fork, the state Natural Resource Damage ("NRD") program and the US Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA") will be conducting large-scale remediation and restoration of the upper 45 miles of river. The goal of all these projects is to re-establish populations of native and wild non-native salmonids and other fish that have been injured in the basin.

2008 Application	BUDGET SUMMARY FORM				
EXPENSE CATEGORY	UCFRB RESTORATION FUND	MATCHING FUNDS			TOTAL
		Cash	In-Kind	Subtotal	
1 SALARIES AND WAGES	$8,760.00				$8,760.00
2 FRINGE BENEFITS					
3 CONTRACTED SERVICES	$141,660.00	$52,530.00		$52,530.00	$194,190.00
4 SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS	$49,513.00				$49,513.00
5 COMMUNICATIONS					
6 TRAVEL					
7 RENT AND UTILITIES					
8 EQUIPMENT					
9 MISCELLANEOUS					
TOTAL	$199,933.00	$52,530.00		$52,530.00	$252,463.00

In electronic form this spreadsheet will automatically calculate the expense totals from the Budget Detail Form.